

NEW YORK ETCHINGS

Endicoff, Max, 1888-1972

THE SUBWAY

A tube of impenetrable black shadows,
Through which
Dart
Yellow-blotched things of steel,
With a crunching, grinding cry
Of souls in torture.
The dismal realm of Darkness,
Where Man conceals
His unnatural lust for speed
From the frank and placid gaze of the sun.

THE SEA-LINER

Eight convulsive tugboats,
Unheroic toilers,
Transmute their life strength
Into a motion imperceptible
Of the giant sea-liner.
The leviathan
With vulgar contempt
Spits from a thousand mouths;
Meeting the admiring screech
Of humbler kin
With haughty silence.

THE PUBLIC LIBRARY

A mausoleum,
Of stained marble and gilded trappings,
Of spacious vaults and shadowed silences
Broken, only, by the hollow echo
Of hurrying foot-steps.
In certain chambers,
Tier upon tier of shelves,
Like miniature unsealed graves,
Bear at rest

The tiny coffins of paper and cloth:
The final abode of mortal thought.
And here, the ghouls—
Mute, furtive and light-of-foot—
Prowl about;
Peering into the barren homes of the dead
For precious words to help the living.

THE TERMINAL

Ravenous stomach of stone and steel
Gulping in
Sizzling, steaming morsels.
Now, a string of wooden sausages
Hurls itself
Into the deep, cavernous maw,
And a moment later
A hissing, stenchful mess
Is vomited forth.